



Digital Commons@

Loyola Marymount University
LMU Loyola Law School

Spiritual Essays

Center for Ignatian Spirituality

2014

Lost and Found Pt. 2

Fr. Randy Roche

Loyola Marymount University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.lmu.edu/spiritualessays>



Part of the [Catholic Studies Commons](#), and the [Religious Thought, Theology and Philosophy of Religion Commons](#)

Repository Citation

Roche, Fr. Randy, "Lost and Found Pt. 2" (2014). *Spiritual Essays*. 349.

<https://digitalcommons.lmu.edu/spiritualessays/349>

This Essay is brought to you for free and open access by the Center for Ignatian Spirituality at Digital Commons @ Loyola Marymount University and Loyola Law School. It has been accepted for inclusion in Spiritual Essays by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons@Loyola Marymount University and Loyola Law School. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@lmu.edu.

Lost and Found

Stories abound of characters in very difficult circumstances who say: "I'm lost!" Such an exclamation conveys intense pain, confusion, or hopelessness, deriving its power from the feelings of a person who is literally lost, and is in the fearful situation of having little or no control over his or her safe arrival home. While some people enjoy challenges of being in unfamiliar surroundings where they have to find their physical directions to safety or their metaphorical directions through to a solution, most of us become quite uncomfortable even thinking about really being lost.

The hymn "Amazing Grace" contains the line, "I once was lost but now I'm found." We can identify with the words, because we are so used to both the literal meaning and many other resonances with "lost" that we carry within us. Though none of us would get ourselves lost so that we could be found, most of us have had experiences where we felt lost, and were greatly relieved when we found our way through the difficulty or were helped to safety or recovery. Being found, in any context where "lost" is the opposite, is most certainly positive.

It would seem only logical to think that we would have to be lost before we could be found. And that is true when we are conscious of our situation of having no way out of a present difficulty. But from another perspective, we are sometimes not aware of our need before we are found. Through the use of reflection, we are liable to discover examples of being found when we did not realize that we were lost, or even before we lost our way. We might have been going down what we now recognize as a dead end from which a return would not have been in our power, and also recall a gracious movement within, or an unexpected intervention from without, that nudged us in a helpful direction. Only after looking back do we see what happened. We were lost, and were found, which can elicit honest, joyful gratitude.

We might look back on some misadventures that came very close to becoming disasters, and now see, with the clarity of reflection, that we were "found" before we became very dangerously lost. Rather than frightening ourselves by recalling such times, these can become very real opportunities for realizing how closely and lovingly God has been with us at all times, while always respecting our freedom to choose our own way. We can appreciate such gifts and graces when we reflect on those situations where we decided to make our own routes through the tangle of life's challenges and become confused as to our purpose; and were then offered a principled path we could take, leading to a meaningful life.

Cell phones and GPS applications offer us protection from getting lost as to locations. But by far the more painful situations of becoming lost are when we do not know how to make our way through a ruptured relationship, a grievous loss or an imminent decision that will surely affect our lives. But God is present, more reliably than satellites above and battery-dependent devices in our pockets. For matters of the heart, we do well to trust God, and to communicate with honesty and sincerity that we are lost.

And then we are found.